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August 5, 1991

Mr. Bill McDonald
Assistant Deputy Commissioner
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Mr. McDonald:

This letter is in response to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's "Discussion Paper on Repayment of Kesterson Reservoir Cleanup Program and San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program Costs," dated July 1991.

After reviewing the Discussion Paper, the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Oversight Committee (DOC) has unanimously agreed to reaffirm its position as set forth by the Policy Statement unanimously adopted by the predecessor San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) in May, 1988.

As you know, the CAC represented a broad cross section of interests concerned with west side San Joaquin Valley agricultural drainage-related problems. All members of the CAC have been reappointed to the newly formed DOC, and we believe our position fairly reflects that representation.

Citing from the CAC Policy Statement, the DOC believes that, in regard to the Kesterson Cleanup Program, "... the principal responsibility for the costs of cleanup of Kesterson Reservoir should be borne by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ..." The Bureau itself chose Kesterson as the terminus for the San Luis Drain and allowed drainage water to flow there. The Bureau has been collecting fees for more than 10 years from the San Luis Unit Contractors, yet no services are being provided. Furthermore, the Contractors had no influence over where their drainage water was disposed of, or on the unilateral decisions designating Kesterson as a wildlife refuge, and its ultimate closure and cleanup.

With respect to the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program, the DOC believes that "... the beneficiaries of the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program should be responsible for payment and/or repayment of all the costs of the Program which are fairly attributable to them. ..."

Enclosed is a copy of the Policy Statement which was reaffirmed by the DOC on August 14, 1991. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me or any other member of the DOC.

Sincerely yours,

committee members

Enclosure